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**December 8, 2015**

## **Comptroller Report Examines AP Exam Pilot Program**

A new study from the Comptroller's Offices of Research and Education Accountability (OREA) finds mixed results for a state pilot program designed to increase student enrollment and success in Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

State lawmakers created the pilot in 2013, allocating \$200,000 to pay for exam costs during the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. The law that created the pilot program also called for an evaluation of its effectiveness by the Comptroller's Office.

The pilot program covered exam costs for participating students at select high schools across the state. In all, 16 high schools participated during the two years studied. Comptroller's Office researchers compared results for participating high schools with data from the two years before the pilot began.

The pilot program's goals were to increase course enrollment, exam participation, and exam success.

The study found that student enrollment was lower in the AP courses when compared with the two years preceding the pilot, but more students chose to take AP exams in these courses. The percentage of students who passed the exams declined, though the number of exams with passing scores was slightly higher.

The state pilot program also included money to pay for Industry Certification exam fees, however the Comptroller's Office could not draw conclusions because of issues with the program's structure and available data, among other factors.

In addition to an analysis of the pilot program's outcomes, the report provides state lawmakers with policy considerations. These include considering the degree of alignment between the pilot's goals and its design, and how a future program might be structured so that participating schools could access federal exam fee subsidies for low-income students.

To view the full report online, go to: <http://comptroller.tn.gov/OREA/>

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